

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

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INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PINS, PE

SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS ON PERU'S RELATIONS WITH
NEIGHBORS, UPCOMING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND INTERNAL
SECURITY

REF: LIMA 0043

SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH REPORTERS INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS
REJECTED THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PERU AND
CHILE AND REFERRED TO ON-GOING STEPS TO IMPROVE PERU'S RELATIONS
WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. CISNEROS DISCARDED THE POSSIBILITY OF MUNI-
CIPAL ELECTIONS IN 1977. HE DEFENDED INTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES,
STATING THAT PARALYZING STRIKES WOULD ERUPT IF CONSTITUTIONAL
GUARANTEES WERE RESTORED. FINALLY HE REFERRED TO THE RECENT
OPENING OF PERIODICALS, COMMENTING THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD ACCEPT
CRITICISM INSOFAR AS IT DOES NOT LEAD TO ACTION UNDERMINING ORDER
AND LEADING TO SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY. END SUMMARY.

1. INTERIOR MINISTER BRIG. GENERAL LUIS CISNEROS
VIZQUERRA TALKED WITH JOURNALISTS DURING A RECENT TRIP TO
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AREQUIPA WITH VISITING ARGENTINE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL
ROBERTO VIOLA. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN AREQUIPA ON JANUARY 26
CISNEROS REFERRED TO POSITIVE STEPS BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE
RELATIONS BETWEEN PERU AND ITS NEIGHBORS, ADDING SHARPLY THAT
"THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN PERU AND CHILE".
HE ADMITTED THAT TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES CAN AND SHOULD
BE IMPROVED, AND DENOUNCED THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS FOR TRYING

TO CREATE THE IMAGE OF A BELLIGERENT WAR-LIKE PERU SOLD OUT TO SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

2. CISNEROS' DECLARATIONS ON ANTICIPATED MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICAL FUTURE AROUSED THE MOST INTEREST. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE GOP CONTINUES ITS STUDY OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ELECTIONS IN THE FUTURE, BUT THAT THEIR EXACT FORM OR TIMING HAS NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED. ACCORDING TO THE TABLOID CORREO, CISNEROS AFFIRMED THAT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WILL NOT BE HELD THIS YEAR, BUT THAT THERE WILL DEFINITELY BE LOCAL ELECTIONS IN 1978 AS "A FIRST STEP TOWARD THE TRANSFER OF POWER". HE ADDED THAT FUTURE ELECTIONS WILL NOT FOLLOW TRADITIONAL PATTERNS, BUT THAT THEIR EXACT NATURE IS YET UNDETERMINED. OTHER PAPERS WERE LESS SPECIFIC IN REPORTING CISNEROS' REMARKS ON ELECTIONS.

3. REFERRING TO INTERNAL SECURITY, CISNEROS DEFENDED THE ONGOING STATE OF EMERGENCY AND SUSPENSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, DESPITE THEIR ACKNOWLEDGED UNPOPULARITY. HE SPECULATED THAT IF EMERGENCY MEASURES WERE LIFTED THERE WOULD BE PARALYZING STRIKES THAT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO CONTROL, AND SAID THAT THE MILITARY WANTS TO AVOID THE USE OF FORCE. HE ADDED THAT THE GOP IS PRESENTLY MAINTAINING CAREFUL VIGILANCE OF EXTREME LEFTIST GROUPS. IN DECLARATIONS TO THE PRESS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR AREQUIPA, CISNEROS ADMITTED THAT THERE ARE AROUND 100 POLITICAL "DETAINEES" AT THE PRESENT TIME, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE FAR-LEFT TEACHERS UNION, SUTEP, WHICH CALLED A 24-HOUR STRIKE IN OCTOBER 1976 AND MUNICIPAL WORKERS WHO ALSO WALKED OUT. HE SAID THAT THE MUNICIPAL WORKERS WOULD BE RELEASED SOON, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND DENIED THAT THE GOP WAS CONSIDERING DEPORTING THE SUTEP DETAINEES.

4. REFERRING TO THE REOPENING OF SOME INDEPENDENT MAGAZINES (SEPAIRGRAM TO FOLLOW) CISNEROS DECLARED THAT CONDITIONS ARE NOT YET RIGHT FOR THE APPEARANCE OF OTHER MAGAZINES THAT WERE NOT ALLOWED TO BEGIN PUBLICATION AGAIN, SINCE THE GOP CANNOT ACCEPT CRITICISM WHICH LEADS TO A SUBVERSION OF INTERNAL ORDER OR TO A DIVISION WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES. HE SAID THAT THE GOP WOULD ACCEPT CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM ORIENTED TOWARD THE SOLUTION OF PROBLEMS, BUT THAT PUBLICATIONS INSTIGATING A CLASS STRUGGLE WOULD NOT BE TOLERATED.

5. COMMENT: CISNEROS STRONGLY REITERATED THE PERUVIAN POSITION THAT THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE RECENT APPARENT INCREASE IN PERU/CHILE TENSIONS. HOWEVER HE ASSERTED AT THE SAME TIME THAT STEPS WERE BEING TAKEN TO IMPROVE PERU'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. CISNEROS' COMMENTS ON MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WERE HANDLED IN A MOST POSITIVE

MANNER BY THE DAILY PRESS, YET THEY REPRESENT A STEP BACK FROM AN EARLIER GOP SUGGESTION THAT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS MIGHT WELL TAKE PLACE BY MID-1977. BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD ALLUDED TO 1977 ELECTIONS, AND THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN DAILY AT ONE POINT TALKED OF 1977 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN PAGE ONE COVERAGE. YET MORALES BERMUDEZ IN HIS END-OF-THE-YEAR PRESS CONFERENCE MADE NO REFERENCE TO MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, MERELY SPEAKING OF A JANUARY OR FEBRUARY DRAFT POLITICAL PLAN WHICH WILL INCLUDE A PROGRAM FOR EVENTUAL TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT IN THREE OR FOUR YEARS. TRUJILLO CITY FATHERS RECENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE DRAFT POLITICAL PLAN NOW CALLS FOR THE TESTING OF ELECTORAL WATERS BY MEANS OF ELECTIONS IN A FEW TOWNS LIKE MOQUEGUA OR EVEN IQUITOS. THEY DID NOT EXPECT APRA-DOMINATED TRUJILLO WOULD BE SELECTED. RECENTLY REOPENED PERIODICALS HAVE PICKED UP THE STORY OF "TEST ELECTIONS". POLITICAL PARTIES REJECT THE CONCEPT JUST AS THEY REJECT A CONTINUING GOP EFFORT TO INTRODUCE NON-TRADITIONAL ELECTORAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORMULAS. PARTIES HOPE TO CONVINCE GOP LEADERSHIP THAT THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTION FOR ELECTIONS BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL VOTE FOR CANDIDATES OF CHOICE.
DEAN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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